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# WILL DRINKING HOT MILK AND CINNAMON BEFORE BED PUT ME TO SLEEP?

Jan 4, 2012 | By [Natalie Smith](#)[f](#) Like

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Many people have a favorite remedy for falling asleep, such as hot decaffeinated tea or taking a melatonin supplement. Beverages containing warm milk and cinnamon are another well-known home remedy for sleeplessness, according to Joyce A. Walsleben and Rita Baron-Faust, authors of "A Woman's Guide to Sleep." There is some limited scientific support for the effectiveness of milk for helping people sleep. However, research indicates that cinnamon promotes alertness rather than fatigue.

## MILK AND SLEEP

Milk contains an amino acid called tryptophan, which turns to serotonin

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in the body. Serotonin helps to modulate sleep. However, some research, including a 2003 study published in "The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition," demonstrates that while milk does contain tryptophan, the tryptophan may be hindered from crossing into the brain by the protein in the milk. For tryptophan to be effective in causing sleep, it must be paired with foods that are low in protein and high in carbohydrates.

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## CINNAMON AND SLEEP

As of 2011, there is no scientific evidence that cinnamon helps facilitate sleep. However, the scent of cinnamon was clinically shown to increase alertness and decrease frustration while people drive, according to a 2009 study in the "North American Journal of Psychology." Although this study examined smelling cinnamon rather than ingesting it, it may suggest that adding cinnamon to warm milk or any other food or beverage meant to induce sleep might have the counterproductive effect of making you more alert. As a result, it may be more beneficial to skip the cinnamon at bedtime.

## CINNAMON AND MILK

While the research is divided on whether the tryptophan in milk can make you sleepy, and cinnamon may make you more alert, the research does suggest that these ingredients probably do not physically cause you to fall asleep. However, if you find cinnamon and milk a soothing beverage at bedtime and it is part of your bedtime ritual, it may be a psychologically beneficial sleep aid, according to Anahad O'Connor of "The New York Times."

## OTHER NATURAL SLEEP AIDS

If you are interested in natural sleep aids, several supplements may help. One is mixing nutmeg with milk. A pinch of nutmeg may act as a natural relaxant, according to Richard Leviton, author of "Brain Builders!" Additionally, taking a melatonin supplement may help you fall asleep faster. Valerian root or chamomile may also help you fall asleep and may be effective for treating insomnia. Talk to your physician before

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you begin taking any dietary supplement to promote sleep, because some remedies may interact with prescription medications or have side effects.

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